

been a good idea, but Alex and I—5 feet tall, both of us—had to put on these huge bright orange flight suits that were made for someone much bigger than either of us. I just remember catching her eye and we started laughing at each other and at ourselves. She and I had so many moments such as that together because Alex is very serious about her work, but she doesn't take herself seriously. She is much fun to be around, and she has a fantastic sense of humor, which is good for me because I don't think there is anyone I have spent more time with in my car traveling around Washington State than Alex.

On a particularly stressful or long day on the road, Alex always made sure we had cookies in the car, which I very much appreciated. Once, during a busier day than usual, I remember Alex and I having a conversation about all the fun places we had to pass by in the car as we drove to the next events but never had time to stop and visit.

We resolved to find the time to visit some of those when things got a bit slower, and I haven't forgotten about that. One day Alex and I are going to visit that alpaca farm up in Skagit Valley.

Alex also knew there was nothing I liked more than doing events where I could wear my jeans and tennis shoes, and I know she fought hard to make sure that happened as often as possible; and, Alex, I appreciate that.

Alex always had my back. She was always ready to get done what needed to get done. Back in 2004, I was facing a tough reelection campaign in my State. Alex had a life here in DC, but I went to her and I asked her to move back to the State to help me. I wanted her there, not because she is just good at her job and knows my voice so well—though she certainly is and does—but because she shares values, and I had every confidence that she would know exactly how I would want to tell my story and get my message out to the people in Washington. And Alex, without blinking, said yes. She packed up her bags and boxed up her apartment, she put her pet bunny in the car—I think this may be one of the most well-traveled rabbits in all of America—and she drove all the way across the country to fight by my side in Washington State. I don't know if I could have done it without her.

Alex then, after that election, came back here to DC and spent 6 years as my communication director. Then she did it all over again—uprooting her life, packing up that bunny, and driving all across the State when I needed her out in Washington State again last year. After she finished that job, I asked Alex to come back here to Washington, DC, to serve as my senior adviser and provide me with counsel and advice as I took on new challenges, and I was grateful when she accepted and got to work.

But 10½ years after Alex Glass first started working for me, the moment

came that I knew was always going to come but never looked forward to. Alex knocked on the door of my office and walked in, and before she could say a word I knew exactly what she had come to tell me. I gave her a hug. We talked. There may have been a few tears shed. But I always knew that Alex has the skills, the talent, and the experience to do absolutely anything she wants to do, and I am proud that she has chosen to continue working in public service and has accepted a job at USAID.

Although she is moving on, her amazing work and strong influence in my office will continue. Her words and her ideas have helped shape so much of what I have done and how I have communicated with my constituents. I can't tell you how many Washington State reporters have come over to me to thank me. They told me how helpful Alex was, how responsive and how good she was at connecting the policy debates here in Congress to the struggles of families and communities in our State.

Alex didn't just keep this to herself. She helped build and mentor a strong team in my office that knows what we are trying to do and understands my voice and how I want to communicate with the people I represent.

I have had many members of my staff come and go in my time here in the Senate. Many of them have been outstanding. Every one of them has added value and done good work for me and my constituents. But there are very few I have come as close to as I have to Alex.

Over the last 10 years, Alex, you have been like a member of my family, truly like a daughter to me. You have gone to the mat time and time again for me. You have been through thick and thin with us. You have sacrificed so much for me and my office, and I can't express enough how deeply I appreciate it. I know there is nothing you wouldn't do for me, and I hope you know I feel the same way about you. So on behalf of everyone in my office, all the constituents I represent, I want to thank you for the years of service to Washington State and to the Nation. You have been my voice, my adviser, my confidante and, most importantly, my friend. It has meant so much to me. And although I know it will continue, you aren't going away very far, I am going to miss seeing you in the office and hearing your voice almost every day.

So, Alex, as you start this exciting new chapter in your professional life, remember what Rob and I would say to you when times got tough out in the State: Shoulders up. Shoulders up. You have helped me keep mine up for more than 10 years, and I wish you luck now as you tackle your next challenge with the same heart, gusto, and good humor that you brought to our office every day.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

# RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:49 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BEGICH).

## UNITED STATES-KOREA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT—Continued

## UNITED STATES-PANAMA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT—Continued

## UNITED STATES-COLOMBIA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent I be allowed to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. BINGAMAN pertaining to the introduction of S. 1692 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CARDIN). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I am happy to rise today to speak about the three trade agreements that are working their way over to the Senate. At a time when unemployment is over 9 percent and we have over 14 million Americans out of work, it is past time for us to take up these three important agreements. These agreements with Korea, Colombia, and Panama are going to create jobs and put Americans back to work. That is why it is so important we move, and move on a bipartisan basis, to get them done.

With 95 percent of consumers living outside of our borders, we need to proactively help American workers, farmers, and service providers sell their products all around the world. The President himself has said that repeatedly. Just last month he came to Ohio and said he wants to be sure more products are stamped with the three proud words "Made in America." I couldn't agree more.

One way to do that is to get these trade agreements done. Finally, we have the opportunity to vote on them. This will help us to gain market access for U.S. workers to about 100 million consumers.

Unfortunately, while these agreements have been sitting on the shelf for over 4 years, our workers, our farmers, and our service providers have lost market share. They have fallen behind because other countries have completed agreements, and their workers and their farmers, their service providers have gained market share that